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ABSTRACT

This paper is written for people who are already familiar with the philosophy and methodology of Paulo Freire's liberatory education and are interested in creating a formation program for adult education facilitators using his ideas. The author describes the paper as "a collection of thoughts, of things to consider," when organizing such a program. Following an introduction, which touches briefly on the meaning of liberatory education, and directs those unfamiliar with the subject to various helpful materials, the selection of both facilitators and formation coordinators is discussed. The third section, "Formation Experiences," is organized as follows: (1) Congruence between the process, the philosophy and the content: "La Voz de la Gente"; (2) planning the formation sessions; (3) building trust; (4) understanding the community and learning from the people; (5) political and economic analysis: identifying with the oppressed; (6) practice in skills, methods and techniques; and (7) on-going practice, observation and reflection. The fourth section discusses the difficulties of putting into practice the ideas put forward in the preceding sections. The next section provides a list of resources: (1) books and articles by and about Freire; (2) the application of Freire in the United States and in other countries, and other examples of liberatory education; (3) group dynamics and samples of exercises and activities; (4) facilitator training manuals, and plans for facilitator formation workshops developed by projects in the Educacion Liberadora Network; and (5) resources not in any other category. Finally, a selected bibliography is provided. (RDN)

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PREFACE

This publication is one of two publications emanating from the IRCEL (Information and Resource Center for Education Liberadora) project funded by FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education) under the direction of Blanca Facundo, Project Director.

A very special thanks goes to Phyllis Noble for her hard work and dedication in writing this monograph.

We are also indebted to the National Institute of Education (NIE) for providing funds to have sponsored Phyllis as an intern with the Latino Institute Research Division during six months in 1982. This opportunity provided a minimal stipend to allow Phyllis to complete her work at our Reston, Virginia offices.

Abdin Noboa, Ph.D.
Director, D.C. Offices
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GRACIAS

To: Tim D'Emilio, Cl[illegible]yce Lee Evans, Tom Heaney, Sarah Hirschman, Caridad Inda, Tomas Kalmar, Koss Kidd, Clarence Lusane, Wendy Luttrell, Daphne Mayorga, Valerie Miller, Dan Rabideau, Pepe Romero, Iris Santos Rivera, Marge Schuler, Ira Shor, Ed Sunshine, Marilyn Turkovich, Phil Wheaton, Barbara Zulli, and Marcelo Zwierzynski, among many others.

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Con mucho cariño,

Phyllis Noble

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I

INTRODUCTION

This paper is written for persons who are interested in putting together a formation program for adult education facilitators, using the ideas of Paulo Freire. The thoughts expressed here assume that the reader is a person whose responsibility is making the formation program happen (usually an administrator-type — somebody who's in a position to pull strings to get the funds and maneuver time schedules and find the substitutes and order the coffee and rolls) or a person who will be chosen to coordinate the formation experiences — the facilitator's facilitator.

A prerequisite for thinking about the formation of facilitators is an understanding of the ideas behind liberatory education. This paper will be helpful if the reader already has a familiarity with the philosophy and methodology of Paulo Freire. If you're not sure about what that is, then I would recommend that you first get yourself a copy of Cynthia Brown's book Literacy in 30 Hours, which explains the method Freire used in literacy education in Northeast Brazil. Also read the first part of Education for a Critical Consciousness, which Freire wrote himself, explaining his method very clearly, step-by-step. And read at least Chapter Two of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, in which Freire talks about the difference between traditional education, which he calls "banking," and learning through a dialogue between equals.

I would also recommend, before thinking seriously about the question of facilitator formation, getting some first-hand acquaintance with a liberatory education program. Participate in some of the sessions, talk with people, ask a lot of questions. Find out about the connection between education and empowerment. What is "empowerment" anyway? What do people mean when they talk about "conscientización"? Is it just analytical reflection and consciousness-raising, or is it also about action, about transforming society? How do you connect action

with education? How do you organize for action without manipulating people? Are schools and adult education centers the best places for this kind of education to take place? Ponder over these things and dialogue with people who've been involved as educators and as learners in liberatory education programs.

There are a number of liberatory education projects in this country. Many of those projects which work with Hispanic adults participate in the Educación Liberadora Network (which does not limit itself to Hispanic projects). Networking activities have been coordinated by the Latino Institute, which has housed a resource center called IRCEL (Information and Resource Center for Educacion Liberadora) and published a bi-monthly newsletter. After January 31, 1983, all these activities will be assumed by Alternative Solutions, Inc. of Reston, Virginia.

The 28 projects participating in the network are diverse. Some serve migrant workers in rural areas; others are located in the barrios of the big cities from New York to San Antonio to San Juan. Some are small projects using one or two rooms; others are huge with hundreds of participants. Some are new and just getting organized; others have been in operation for over ten years. Facilitators in some projects have a high level of formal schooling; some are experienced educators with a thorough understanding of Freire's ideas; and some are workers in the factories and fields of this country, new facilitators who were learners in a project just a few months ago.

What all these projects have in common is the commitment to empowerment of the oppressed.

Some projects have developed formation programs to prepare facilitators for their work in liberatory education. Others have no formal program for formation — in these situations, facilitators learn what they can through informal dialogues with their co-workers.

This paper was written primarily for the several projects which have indicated that they could use help in the area of facilitator formation.

It is not a "training manual." First of all, the word "training" is not used here because it connotes a kind of regimentation, a following through, step-by-step, in a pre-determined process. "Training" seems incompatible with the idea of learning through dialogue. The word "formation" lends itself more comfortably to the idea of growth in an open and human interaction.

Secondly, it's not a "manual." This little work will not serve as a handbook to tell you what to do on the first day of facilitator formation, and what to do on the second. It does not contain ready-made exercises that you can follow in your program.

Is that a disappointment? If you were expecting concrete exercises in a "How To Do It Manual," then you may feel short-changed by what you get here. That's very understandable. But stick with it.

Liberatory education involves the idea of "re-inventing." A genuine dialogue between people exchanging ideas has to be a new dialogue each time. A good program of facilitator formation can't be pre-fabricated in one place and then copied in all the other places. It has to be re-invented all over again in each setting. And in each place, each time, it will be invented somewhat differently. "En verdad, las experiencias no se transplantan, sino que se reinventan,"[1] says Freire in his book, Cartas a Guinea-Bissau, Apuntes de una experiencia pedagógica en proceso (Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea-Bissau).[2]

What follows here is a collection of thoughts, of things to consider, when organizing a facilitator formation program. Most of it can be summed up by saying three things:

1. Formation experiences to prepare Freirian facilitators should be consistent with Freire's pedagogy.
2. It takes a long time; it's not something that can be finished and complete after a 3-day seminar.

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[1] In truth, experiences are not transplanted, but are re-invented.

[2] English translations will be provided throughout the text as footnotes.

3. Liberatory education is political; it's ultimate end is action to transform society. Formation of facilitators shouldn't stop (and perhaps doesn't begin) with the acquisition of skills in a participatory approach to adult education. Questions about WHY we are doing this need to be addressed, as well as questions about the consequences of our work.

A final note about semantics. Freire doesn't like the word "facilitator." I just found that out at a conference in New York in June. Here is what I heard him say:

> I don't like this word 'facilitator' which you created here in this country. It was created not to unveil but to obscure. Sounds to me, seems to me, as if I were ashamed to be an educator, pretending not to be what I am. (Freire, "Educating the Educator" Conference, New York, June 30, 1982.)

Now what do we do about that? I see his point, and I think he's right, but I'm stuck with the word after all these years of using it and calling myself one. So, educators, here begin some thoughts on the formation of Freirian "facilitators."

II

SELECTING THE PARTICIPANTS IN FACILITATOR FORMATION

A. Selection of Facilitators

Who are the facilitators in a project? How are they chosen? On what basis should the selection be made? Are there characteristics of good facilitators that can be identified before participation in formative experiences?

Freire himself mentions a few characteristics. First of all, he says the facilitator must have faith in people, faith in their ability to create, to change things. You have to love, he says, and you have to be convinced that education should be for liberation, not for domestication. He also says that the facilitator must be humble.

> Para que usted pueda ser un buen Coordinador de Círculo de Cultura necesita, antes de todo, tener fe en el hombre. Creer en su posibilidad de crear, de cambiar las cosas. Usted precisa amar. Necesita estar convencido de que el esfuerzo fundamental de la promoción como de la educación, es la liberación del hombre, nunca su 'domesticación' ...
>
> De ahí que usted, Coordinador de un Círculo, tenga que ser humilde, para que pueda promoverse con el grupo, en lugar de perder la humildad y pretender promover al grupo, una vez que se juzga 'promovido.' (Freire, Una pedagogía para el adulto, S. Sanchez, pp. 57.)[1]

---

[1] In order for you to be a good Coordinator of a Circle of Culture, you need, above all, to have faith in the person. To believe in his or her possibility to create, to change things. You must love. You need to be convinced that the fundamental strength of education is the liberation of the person, never his 'domestication.' ...

For this reason, you, the Coordinator of a Circle, must be humble, so that you can progress with the group, instead of losing your humility pretending that it is you who makes the group move ahead because you have already advanced.

How important is it for facilitators to share the characteristics and realities of the learners? Freire is skeptical of middle-class facilitators working with peasants or workers, because of their ideological conditioning, their assimilation of the myths of superiority. Can a facilitator with a middle-class background and education be effective and liberating? Should such a person get involved in this business at all? Probably not, unless that person has identified himself or herself as one of the oppressed, achieving something which Freire calls "class suicide."

> Some of the best experiments I have seen were those in Chile where we had as educators, young Chilean peasants who, when they were trained, revealed indisputable efficiency.... They were a group of young people who were not dreaming of how they might become urbanized. Their dreams were fully identified with those of their own communities....
>
> If it were not possible either to count on peasants who can be rapidly trained for literacy work, as in Chile, nor on urban youths capable of committing 'class suicide' and of 'knowing how to become integrated into their country and with their people', then I would rather dedicate the necessarily longer time to train peasants who might become authentic educators of their comrades, than to use middle-class youth. The latter may be trained more rapidly but their commitment is less trustworthy. (Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea-Bisseau, p. 82.)

The good potential facilitator, then, is a person who has identified with the oppressed. He or she is a humble being who believes that every person is capable of creating, capable of changing things. The good facilitator also has a genuine and profound respect for the dignity of other individuals and has a willingness and ability to really listen. This person is strong enough and mature enough not to be defensive in the face of an honest critique.

These characteristics are deeply ingrained; they are not likely to be acquired in the space of a formation workshop. It probably means that not every enthusiastic applicant will make a good facilitator. There are some who, because of their political ideology or for other reasons, cannot be considered appropriate candidates for work in liberating education.

> In transforming the educational system inherited from the colonizers, one of the necessary tasks is the training of new groups of teachers and the retraining of old ones. Among these teachers, and especially

among those who have taught before, there will always be those who perceive themselves to be 'captured' by the old ideology and who will consciously continue to embrace it; they will fall into the practice of undermining, either in a hidden or an open way, the new practice. From such persons one cannot hope for any positive action toward the reconstruction of society. But there will be others who, also perceiving themselves to be captive to the old ideology, will nonetheless attempt to free themselves from it through the new practice to which they will adhere. It is possible to work with these persons. They are the ones who "commit class suicide." The others refuse to do so. (Letters to Güinea-Bissau, p. 15).

It is important for each project to think about the specific characteristics they want to identify in prospective facilitators. It is only natural that the priority given to different characteristics will vary from project to project, as the communities and their needs are also different. The point is, time should be set aside to consider these characteristics before interviewing any applicants. Solidaridad Humana in New York City has developed a checklist of characteristics and competencies they look for among candidates in their project. Colegio de la Tierra in California has identified 16 beliefs and traits that they feel are prerequisites to being effective as a Community Educator in their program. The Ecuador Project, an endeavor of the University of Massachusetts in the mid-1970's, produced long lists of facilitator characteristics to be identified before and after the training process.

A liberating education project in the Washington D.C. area, Project C.L.U.B. (Critical Literacy for Urban Blacks), has been giving long and careful thought to the matter of facilitator selection. They are concerned about three aspects of a person:

1. Personal — background, skills, activities, education
2. Views of Education — opinions about schools and learning
3. Social Vision — the broad overview

In considering facilitator candidates, they will be focusing on seven specific things:

- How people talk about themselves — their self-concept
- How people perceive the world — e.g., changing, static.
- How people assess their skills and experiences — have they been of value, or a waste?
- Analytical capabilities — how perceptive are they?
- Willingness to seek solutions outside of traditional approaches
- How do they feel about working with people from other cultures and other social backgrounds?

It does not have to be a long, elaborate list. The important thing is that the people whose concern it is to select facilitators need to dialogue carefully about the characteristics of the facilitators they wnat to have in their program.

And who are these people who select the facilitators? Who determines the criteria for selection? Are they administrators? Are they experienced facilitators? Are they a representative group of the learners or students? What works in many projects, is a team of people sharing the responsibility of facilitator selection, the team including an administrator, some experienced facilitators, and also students. It is important to include learners in the dialogue about facilitator characteristics. It is vital for the members of the learning community to have some say in the selection of those who will become their facilitators, from participation in the dialogue about characteristics to having an active role in interviewing the candidates to actually participating in the making of final decisions of whom to hire.

Many liberating education projects in this country are already including learners in this important decision. At the Instituto del Progreso Latino in Chicago, for example, representatives of the adult Mexican immigrant study body interview prospective facilitators and decide which applicants to hire. Solidaridad Humana, in New York, also involves student "delegados" whenever possible in the interview and selection process, as does D.A.R.E. in Puerto Rico.

How can we find out whether an applicant has the characteristics we are looking for? A resume isn't going to tell us many of the things we want to know. Many projects rely on the personal interview, in which the candidates meet with

the team composed of administrator, facilitators, and learners. But this interview is difficult, because it's not concerned solely with competencies. We can't very well ask in an interview, "Are you humble? Do you have faith in people? Have you committed class suicide?"

Planning for the interview, then, in addition to identifying the characteristics of good facilitators, includes coming up with some very good questions that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no. It is often a good idea to describe a hypothetical problematic situation — one that is similar to something that's occurred in your project or your community — and ask, "What would you do in that situation?" For example, you might say, "Suppose one of your adult students comes up to you after class and offers to share with you a bit of high quality marijuana. How would you handle that?" Or, "Suppose it's the second day of class in your American history group and you discover that one of your middle-aged students is just beginning to learn to read and write. What would you do?" Develop your own questions as part of the planning work done by the team. Think up your own as part of the planning work done by the team. If you do choose to make up hypothetical situations, they should be complex enough that a good answer is not obvious. For each characteristic that you have identified, think of a way to ask a question that will give you an idea of who that person really is and how he or she might interact with the other participants in your program.

There is a limit to what can be learned about a person in even a very skillfully conducted interview. We really get to know each other through the formation experiences, through interacting with one another, and through observing one another in practice.

B. Selection of a Formation Coordinator

How do you choose a formation coordinator?

Someone, or some small group of people, needs to be chosen to help the facilitators by coordinating the formation program. Characteristics of this

coordinator should include all those which apply to a good potential facilitator and then some. Certainly the coordinator should be someone who has faith in people, a person who is humble and patient, a good listener, mature, a person who identifies with the disenfranchised.

But the person selected to be formation coordinator needs to have special characteristics that go beyond those mentioned above.

The formation coordinator should have experience and skill as a Freirian facilitator. He or she should be familiar and comfortable with Freire's philosophy and methods, and should be skilled in listening, in facilitating group discussion, and especially in asking critical questions.

The formation coordinator should have a good understanding of oppression, of the systems that oppress, and of the effects and causes of that oppression. He or she should be very clear that the goal of liberating education is ultimately social change and empowerment of the oppressed. If the coordinator is not dedicated to that social transformation and is not personally prepared to take the risks involved in breaking through a limit situation, then the most that can be expected to happen is formation of facilitators in a humanistic, albeit alternative, approach.

> It is necessary that educators be clear about their political choice and be consistent with it in practice. It is necessary to be militantly engaged, learning from the people.... Without the feeling of true militancy we can become specialists with the illusion that as long as we are specialists we are neutral. (Freire, meeting with Alternative Schools Network, 1977, in Cynthia Brown's Literacy in 30 Hours, pp. 62-63.)

Where to find the formation coordinator may depend to a certain extent on how long the project has been in operation. If the formation program is being planned for a project that has been in operation for some time, then perhaps one of the current facilitators, or a small core group of facilitators, could be selected by consensus of the larger group to serve as coordinator of formation. This, of course, presupposes that there are people on staff who have the characteristics described above. Selecting an "insider" to be formation coordinator

needs to be done very carefully so as not to isolate one or two facilitators from their group of peers with a new identification as "experts." Sometimes, especially if there have been internal tensions among the facilitators in a project, it might be helpful to find an objective outsider to coordinate the experiences, to serve as facilitator of the facilitators.

III

FORMATION EXPERIENCES

A. Congruence Between the Process, the Philosophy and the Content: La Voz de la Gente

There is a common phenomenon that some of us have experienced. A new facilitator will talk about liberatory education in a very positive way, seeming to be quite familiar with Freire's ideas, and yet turn around and wind up actually "banking" when he or she gets face-to-face with students in the classroom. Why does this happen?

I see two possible reasons. One has to do with the process of the facilitators' formation, and the other with the facilitators' backgrounds.

First of all, perhaps the formation experiences simply weren't adequate. Perhaps the process of the training seminar (or whatever it was called) was not consistent with the content of the message. People, whose only "hands on" experience with education up until now had been traditional (either as students or as teachers), were simply told what to do; they didn't have a chance to experience the process themselves as learners. Or perhaps the formation experiences ended too quickly, without an opportunity for on-going action and reflective dialogue.

The second reason might be what Freire has said so many times, that a facilitator's middle-class background interferes with his interactions with the learners, that middle-class facilitators are conditioned by their class position and by the myths of their superiority.

> The resistance is often not to the intellectual understanding of a concept of knowledge but to the action coherent with it.... We have observed, for example, that at the intellectual level the teachers in a training seminar may accept totally our analysis of the literacy education of adults as a creative act. They might agree that the learners should assume the role of Subjects in the process of learning their own language and of the expression of that language. Indeed,

> they might understand and accept intellectually that their role as teachers should not be that of transferring knowledge as though they knew everything and the learners knew nothing. They might even be able to apply certain methodological procedures coherent with these principles. In actual practice, however, many of these teachers are conditioned by their class position and by the myths of their superiority in relation to the peasants and workers. They assimilate these myths during their own class education and reduce the learners to mere depositories for their knowledge. (Letters, pp. 15, 80-81.)

If some facilitators intellectually understand and accept the ideas of liberatory education, and yet don't apply these ideas in their interactions with the learners, then we have a specific problem to address in planning for a formation program. My question now is, how far can a formation experience go in counteracting middle-class backgrounds and prejudices? Even a revolutionary facilitator with a middle-class background is likely to resort to banking his or her own economic and political analysis unless the formation program somehow gets across in a very gutsy way the idea that learning is discovery and choice and creativity and collective action and reflection.

> From the ideology of his own class position, the educator, even when he verbalizes a revolutionary stance, does not perceive that to know is not to swallow knowledge. The act of teaching presupposes the act of learning and vice versa. If the educator takes refuge in his role as educator of the people without accepting his own need to be educated by the people, then his revolutionary oratory is counteracted by an alienating and reactionary practice. (Letters, p. 80.)

It is not only the middle-class facilitators who resort almost automatically to authoritarian patterns in the classroom. Facilitators who share the daily work lives of the learners as well as their national, cultural, and economic backgrounds often have the same tendency. All of us — learners, facilitators, administrators — have experienced traditional schooling; most of us have had nothing else. We have learned certain behaviors and attitudes so well that just being in a classroom triggers automatic responses. It's deeply ingrained. It is also like a security blanket; having and giving all the answers feels comfortable in the face of a circle of new learners who have arrived on the first day of class wanting to learn and expecting you to teach. "Maestro."

"Buenas tardes, Maestra." Instant, unearned respect, so easy, feels secretly good. Makes you want to show your stuff, earn that respect, GIVE THEM the information they need and so enthusiastically ask from you. It's powerful stuff, hard to fight.

Authoritarian teachers, ancient but vivid memories, sometimes sarcastic and almost always enjoying their power, form the only role models for most of us. The best ones we remember were the most dynamic, the most dramatic, the most in control. They're all we've EXPERIENCED, even if we've heard about other ways of doing it.

How can we combat all that? As organizers of a formation program, how can we provide NEW experience so profound that it will un-do habits learned through so many years of experience in schools, new experience so powerful that it will cut through assimilated middle-class myths of superiority, something that will go deeper than mere intellectual understanding?

Is it possible?

It seems that it is not enough to simple TELL facilitators about the process, or to ask people to READ about empowerment. The experienced facilitator/coordinator cannot hand over his or her acquired experience and knowledge like a package to the new facilitator, nor can the coordinator hand over the personal acceptance of "his own need to be educated by the people."

> There is often an unperceived contradition between one's perception of the learning process and one's practice. The impatient educator often transfers knowledge like a package while discoursing volubly on the dynamic nature of knowledge. (Letters, p. 64.)

If a facilitator cannot "transfer knowledge like a package" to the learners, then we, as coordinators of formation, should not expect to be able to transfer knowledge of how to be a facilitator to those participating in formation. It wouldn't be consistent with the philosophy. And it doesn't work very well (said the pragmatic North American).

Facilitators, in their own formation, somehow need to experience personally the same process they will later put into effect in their groups. We can't use "banking" techniques to "tell" someone how to be liberating. Again, it would be inconsistent

It's easier to know what we can't do, and what won't work than to see clearly what we can do. What is possible? Where do we begin?

First of all, we have to continually remind ourselves that the facilitators participating in the formation seminar, no matter who they are, have much to offer to those who are coordinating the experiences. "Never underestimate the consciousness and the ingenuity of the people," said Michael James of Project Literacy in California. New facilitators count as people, too. It calls for starting off from a position of tremendous humility.

> If the dichotomy between teaching and learning results in the refusal of the one who teaches to learn from the one being taught, it grows out of an ideology of domination. Those who are called to teach must first learn how to continue learning when they begin to teach .... (Letters, p. 9.)

What does an experienced Freirian facilitator and formation coordinator have to learn from beginning, less experienced facilitators? That is something we each need to be open to in each situation. No matter whether the facilitators-in-formation are Ph.D. candidates in Marxist political science, refugees from the middle-class carrying their heavy baggage with them, or factory and farm workers who just a month ago were student participants in the basic adult education project, each one is a person with great dignity, humanity, and a wealth of experiences and insights to share. Each person has a reason for being there, a dream to realize and energy to make it work. Our job is to listen. And to respect.

I once wrote a long and what I thought to be an eloquent letter to a group of beginning facilitators in a small adult education project. I was quite pleased with myself and sent a copy of the letter to a dear friend who had once worked with Freire in developing literacy programs for West Africa. The feedback I got was humbling and brought me down to where I ought to have begun.

"Entiendo y comparto sus principios a nivel general," he began, "Pero no consigo escuchar en todo esto las voces principales, las de los facilitadores y las de los estudiantes.... La voz de la gente no aparece." (I understand and I share your principles on a general level, but I don't manage to hear, in all of this, the principal voices, those of the facilitators and those of the students. ... The voice of the people doesn't appear.)

The first role of the formation coordinator is to listen, to give the facilitators-in-formation the chance to use their voice, right from the very beginning, to use their voice to name their own problem, to describe their expectations, their needs, to set the goals and objectives of the formation program together with the coordinator. This is the beginning of an experience in empowerment, in making decisions about the course of one's own learning, as part of a community of learners. The formation coordinator is part of that community.

We believe that learning involves an effort of searching, of discovery, of creativity, and of reflection. Somehow, in the course of the formation experiences, the facilitators need to be able to search out for themselves the important questions, the mutual concerns and needs among the group of facilitators, to discover at the same time the realities of the community in which they work, to create collectively solutions to the problems they identify (both problems relating to skill as a facilitator, and problems relating to the broader community), to act on those solutions, and to have the opportunity to reflect together about that action. The formation coordinator is part of that group, helping the participants to look critically at the problems they identify, providing some tools for a critical analysis both of the interaction between facilitators and learners, and of the interaction between learners (including facilitators) and the world. This critical analysis is not something the formation coordinator can GIVE to the facilitators. It is something you construct together.

> The educator's task is not to ... uncover the object himself and to offer it, paternalistically, to the learner, thus denying him the effort of searching that is so indispensable to the act of knowing. Rather, in the connection between the educator and the learner ... the most impor-

> tant factor is the development of a critical attitude in relation to the object and not a discourse by the educator about the object. (Letters, p. 11.)

This is hard to do. It is tempting to "uncover the object" when there is usually so little time available for facilitator formation. There are so many concepts that you want to explore, so much that's vital and important to understand. You are tempted to explain it clearly and move on to the next thing because pretty soon time will be up and the formation seminar will be over. Freire speaks of a tendency to "accelerate the process whether or not conditions are right.... "

> This results in teaching without learning and the 'transfer' of knowledge because 'there is no time to lose.' (Letters, p. 64.)

We are impatient, and understandably so, because there is so much to be accomplished, so many changes to be made, so much to learn. Freire talks a lot about the importance of patience:

> Among the most obvious errors, we might note the impatience of some of the workers that led them to create the words instead of challenging the learners to do so for themselves. (Letters, p. 28.)

And yet he also acknowledges the impatience. He advocates a healthy balance, "a permanent tension between patience and impatience."

> Breaking the tension between patience and impatience ... inevitably leads to teaching without dialogue. No matter what the intention, knowledge is presented as something finished, already concluded. (Letters, p. 64.)

What happens, of course, is that when an idea about liberating education — say, an idea about the importance of discovery in the process of learning — when that idea is presented as something finished and concluded, before people have arrived at that conclusion by figuring it out themselves, it's incorporated merely on an intellectual level, and we're back to the problem we started with. In telling about the importance of discovery too soon, we've sabotaged the act of discovery.

This is not the same as saying that the role of the facilitator, or the role of the formation coordinator, is a passive one. Just as one can err on the side of being too impatient and "transferring" knowledge, one can also err on the side of being too patient, or passive.

> When there is a rupture in the tension between patience and impatience, the opposite situation might also exist: impatience might also disappear. In this case educators may fall into passivity. 'Let everything stay as it is so that we can see what will happen' is an attitude that has nothing in common with the revolutionary stance. Patience is not conformity. The best way to accomplish those things that are impossible today is to do today whatever is possible. (Letters, p. 60.)

It is a balance between asking critical questions of the facilitators-in-formation to help them arrive at their own critical analysis, and being honest and sharing your own thoughts, too.

> The educator must not press his own position to the point that the learner's position is a mere reflection of his own. At the same time, the educator must not negate, as though from shame, his own insights. (Letters, p. 92.)

Furnishing factual information is appropriate at the right time, but only in response to a problem posed by the facilitators-in-formation.

> When the educator and the learner come close to the object of their analysis and become curious about its meaning, they need the kind of solid information that is indispensable to accurate analysis. To know is not to guess; but information is useful only when a problem has been posed. Without this basic problem-statement, the furnishing of information is not a significant moment in the act of learning and becomes simply the transfer of something from the educator to the learner.... (Letters, p. 11.)

There is a little vignette in something Freire wrote in Chile that is so eloquent and simple, that I want to put it in here, even though it isn't specifically about the formation of facilitators. It speaks about the importance of silences, the tremendous difficulty in being patient, and the intense power of discovery, of owning one's own learning.

En toda esta etapa de análisis, cabe al educador permanentemente, problematizar a los alfabetizandos y no solucionarles las dificultades.

Llega el monento, finalmente, en que se presenta al grupo la 'ficha del descubrimiento.'

Este es el momento fundamental.

Después de un silencio, que casi siempre inquieta al educador, en que el grupo permanece admirando las familias silábicas alienadas frente a él, comienza a crear, combinando sílabas, una palabra.

ra-re-ri-ro-ru
ma-me-mi-mo-mu
da-de-di-do-du

'remo,' dice uno; 'risa' añade otro; 'Roma,' otro más. Dedo, dado, duda, mido, mira, miro, domo, dama, dome, dura, duro, muro, mera, moro, mora, rama, rada, ramo, ramada, van todos creando, felices, sus palabras.

Nunca olvidaremos la emoción con que un hombre, en la primera experiencia que hacíamos, dijo "Nina" frente a la ficha del descubrimento con una risa casi incontenible.

- ¿Que pasa? le preguntamos.

- Este es el nombre de mi mujer, contestó él con intensa emoción.

This is contained in something Freire wrote called Sobre la Accion Cultural published in Santiage, Chile.

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1 Throughout the stage of analysis, the educator's role is always to pose problems with the learners, and not to find solutions to the difficulties.

The moment arrives, finally, in which the discovery board is presented to the group.

This is the fundamental moment.

After a silence, which is almost always disturbing to the educator, in which the group sits admiring the syllabic families lined up in front of it, somebody begins to create a word, combining syllables.

ra-re-ri-ro-ru
ma-me-mi-mo-mu
da-de-di-do-du

If we agree with Freire that the silences are important, then we have to wait and be quiet for a while, and not worry about wasting time. If we understand that patience is essential, then we can't hurry it up.

If we believe that it's in the process of dialogue that people grow and change, then we have to make time for real dialogue to happen.

And if in our hearts we know that nothing of value will happen without a spirit of love and mutual trust, without a unity of understanding and a clarity about shared goals, without a willingness to take risks together, then we have to give time to forming that solid base.

Facilitator formation takes a long time. It is a long, on-going process. It is not something that can be considered "finished" after a weekend retreat or a three-session seminar.

It really never ends.

"remo" says one (row); "risa" adds another (laugh); "Roma", still another word (Rome). (Many samples of words formed by combining syllables from those presented.) They all go on, happily, creating their words.

We will never forget the emotion with which one man said "Nina" in front of the discovery board, with an almost uncontainable laughter. (This was during the first experience in which we did this.)

"What's going on?" we asked him.

"This is the name of my woman," he answered with intense emotion.

B. Planning the Formation Sessions

> The seminar belongs to us; the program has to be built by us together. (Freire, "Educating the Educator" Conference, New York, June 30, 1982.)

Plan it together. Begin with the facilitators' expressed needs and questions. Ask people what it is they hope to accomplish during the formation experiences. Listen to their responses and take them seriously.

> The most potent demonstration you can provide of the importance of understanding the learners with whom your trainees will work — their environment, their needs, their learning objectives, and their resources for meeting these objectives — is, of course, to show that you understand the trainees with whom you are working. Let them see that you are taking into account their objectives.... (From the Field, World Education, p. 25.)

But it is more than just "taking into account" the objectives of the facilitators; it is a matter of actually forming the agenda together with the facilitators.

The facilitators have come to this seminar or training session or whatever you are calling it with certain expectations, with a set of questions they hope to get answered in the course of the experience. Perhaps they've come hoping to acquire some specific skills; it is likely some have arrived with strong ideas and skills they are hoping to be able to share with others. Some will bring along a whole set of anxieties about the prospect of being a facilitator.

Maybe the expectations of the facilitators parallel your own, maybe not. What if they are different? What do you do if the facilitators' stated objectives don't include some points you think are absolutely essential? Then be honest, and include your own expectations in the agenda along with theirs. You, as coordinator, are also part of the group. Just keep in mind the idea of the process being congruent with the philosophy. Regardless whether the ideas you have to share are about Freire's methodology, about political/economic analysis, or about group dynamics, it is important to remember that the giving of information only follows the posing of the question.

Perhaps the responses from the facilitators will include a wish to clarify the goals and purposes of the education center in which you are all working. Perhaps not. Perhaps they will initially focus primarily on skill development, or on understanding the philosophy of liberatory education. It is always possible that, in the course of the formation program, a review of the agenda will reveal that the goals have changed mid-stream, and that participants are realizing the need to explore other areas that had not surfaced earlier as needs.

At some point, most formation programs will probably want to address most of the following areas:

- familiarization with the community of the learners
- political/economic analysis of the context in which the facilitators are working; examining the possibilities for action, for transforming society where you are
- understanding of what is meant by "liberatory education" in your center; Freire's ideas; pedagogical (or "andragogical") theory
- development of skills in listening, in posing critical questions, in facilitating dialogue, in understanding group process, in dealing with conflict
- applying participatory methodology and critical analysis to specific curriculum areas — e.g., math, ESL, history, science, art

Begin where the facilitators are. Their most immediate concern is the issue with which you begin. If the facilitators design the formation program with you they will own it; it will be theirs.

The process of planning the formation, of identifying the problems which the facilitators want to address, of agreeing on the goals of the formation process, of setting up an agenda, is an important process which deserves time. I am reminded of a project of World Education, described in their Facilitator Skills Training Kit (now out of print) in which the trainers determined the goals of the facilitator training program and then presented the goals to the facilitators for their review in an exercise that was to take 10 minutes. Instructions read, "Give participants time to read goals and ask for their comments. Ask participants if they feel they can agree to work together to attain these goals." The assumption is that all will meekly agree.

> In a new paradigm, participation is not merely a function of implementation, but also of planning a program. (Jane K. Vella, Learning to Listen, p. 7.)

It would be a mistake to try to design a formation program apart from the participation of the facilitators. To do that would be to take away their ownership of their own learning. When Freire thought about the need for a formation program for facilitators in Guinea-Bissau, he decided to go to that country without any detailed plan in mind.

> We left Geneva ready to see and hear, to inquire and to discuss. In our baggage we carried no saving plans or reports semi-prepared.
>
> As a team, we had talked in Geneva about the best way to see and hear, inquire and discuss so that the plan for our contribution might result — a plan for a program that would be born there, in dialogue with people of the country, about their own reality, their needs, and the possibility of our assistance. We could not design such a plan for them in Geneva. (Letters, p. 12.)

C. Building Trust

> A major problem in setting up the program is instructing the teams of coordinators. Teaching the purely technical aspect of the procedure is not difficult; the difficulty lies rather in the creation of a new attitude — that of dialogue, so absent in our own upbringing and education. The coordinators must be converted to dialogue in order to carry out education rather than domestication. (Freire, Education for Critical Consciousness, p. 52.)

Liberatory education is not a solitary thing. It is something we do together in a group — naming a problem, analyzing it, figuring out solutions to it, taking action (involving some risk), and then reflecting together before taking more action.

The core of this very human, supportive, and creative business is dialogue.

> Dialogue creates a critical attitude. It is nourished by love, humility, hope, faith, and trust. When the two 'poles' of the dialogue are thus linked by love, hope, and mutual trust, they can join in a critical search for something. Only dialogue truly communicates. (Pedagogy, p. 45.)

Dialogue, then, is also the basis for learning in the facilitator formation program. But it is not going to work unless people trust one another, especially since we are ultimately talking about taking risks together. And not much is going to come of it unless there is a spirit of hope that we are all moving along together in more or less the same direction, sharing the same goals, developing something for the same purpose.

So how do we develop that trust, that spirit of hope, among the facilitators? How can we help build a mutual respect and empathy among all participants of the group? How do we build a sense of community, a valuing of that growth of community?

Group process training manuals speak of "icebreaker" exercises that might last an hour, in which participants are to "get acquainted." They are nice and usually lots of fun, but they don't fill the bill. We need something more profound than what can be achieved through a simple group dynamics game.

First of all, the actual participation in planning the program is a beginning in the building of trust. All the participants in the group — the facilitators and the coordinator — hear one another's concerns, begin to see some commonalities, begin to gain an understanding of one another's needs and motivations for being there.

<u>The very process of naming the problem together, the process of agreeing on the naming of the problem, of setting goals together, or sharing personal feelings relative to the central issue, is an indispensable phase of building trust</u>.

But this process of agreeing on the goals and the agenda isn't easy. There will most likely be differences of opinion, and that's fine and necessary.

> Cohesiveness is not a matter of agreement, but of healthy interaction among group members with differing viewpoints, capabilities, and roles.... If a group is too complete in its agreement, it loses its spirit, and there can be no real growth or change in its members or of the group-as-a-whole. It becomes' an aggregate of contented cows.' (Margaret E. Kuhn, <u>You Can't Be Human Alone</u>.)

Freire agrees about the healthiness and important function of conflicts. "Conflicts are the midwives of consciousness," he said at the New York conference (1982).

Successful resolution of early conflicts and tensions is another important factor in the building of trust. Somehow, the conflicts need to be resolved in such a way that the opinions expressed are listened to and respected. This is one place where the formation coordinator's skills need to be sharp and strong. The members of the group may need help in the beginning in order to enable each other to express themselves and to be heard. They need to know that the group is a safe place in which to express ideas and feelings, that destructive or self-serving behavior will not be allowed to go on. The early conflicts and the way in which they are resolved can be almost like a test of trustworthiness of the group as a whole. The formation coordinator here serves as a model for the rest of the facilitators — a model of respect for conflicting opinions, and a model of good conflict resolution.

Another important factor in the building of trust is a sharing of the personal self of each participant.

> ... There can be no group until the ideas and feelings of each member — and his intentions — have been awakened and clarified; communicated by him; and understood and appropriated willingly by every other member of the group; and finally interwoven into a group climate, group viewpoint, and goal. (Ross Snyder, A Theory of Group Dynamics, Chicago Theological Seminary.)

If we are talking about ultimately transforming society, then we need to be about the business of building lasting, deep, and trusting relationships. Leonard Andiano of the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, Texas, states emphatically that the participants have to know each other well, beyond the formal introduction. Where do their grandparents come from? Where were they born? Where do they live? What were their childhood experiences? What are their family experiences now? Their economic conditions? What kind of jobs do they hold? What are their hopes and frustrations? Their dreams? Their fears?

The member of a trusting community begins to learn about himself or herself in the process of sharing with others.

> The member gradually unpacks the suitcase of his emotions and mind — the 'ghost agenda' of hurts, frustrations, fears he has acquired from other relationships with parents, teachers, peers. He begins to see himself as he operates, and to see what happens when he is understood rather than ignored. He begins to test out better ways of carrying on conflicts and of expressing himself. He loses the need to be defensive, passive.... (Snyder, Theory of Group Dynamics.)

This is scary. Getting in touch with deeply personal parts of our lives, and then sharing those things with other people, can be very threatening, and it is not necessarily the most appropriate thing to do in the very beginning. The group can begin by sharing other aspects of their lives that are not so very personal — sharing interests and concerns, sharing what they want to share — and then finding out what the commonalities are. What makes us the same?

I trust someone whose personal agenda I understand. I withhold my trust if I suspect some kind of hidden agenda, or some wish to manipulate me.

The formation coordinator who is concerned about building trust within a group must be a trustworthy person herself or himself. This isn't easy. Trust is something that's earned. It requires humility and honesty. I am reminded again of something Freire said at the conference in New York in June:

> It's OK to say, 'Look, I really don't know how to answer.' What the educator cannot do is to escape by lying. We have to say, 'Look, I don't know but the question is important, and I would like to know.'

That kind of humility and honesty comes from a genuine respect for the participants, and it generates trust. Respect for the dignity, the integrity and the intellect of each participant is absolutely essential.

I am disturbed by some group dynamics exercises that seem to be artificially engineered to effect a surprise "discovery" on the part of the participants.

My concern is that we not pull pranks on the participants, "fool" them with a phony game which we engineer so that they can have a joint experience upon which to reflect. They should know what's going on and why it's going on, and have chosen to do it that way by consensus. Otherwise, it's a breach of respect and can break the trust.

> It is disrespectful to invite people to do a task without explaining why the task is to be done, and how the results of it will be shared. (Jane K. Vella, Learning to Listen, p. 5.)

Establishing trust can't be done in one night. It would be so easy if we could simply do some ice-breaker exercises and presto-change-o have instant trust already established. But the building of trust is an on-going thing. It doesn't stop with the initial naming of a problem together, or with a one-time sharing of personal lives. It's something that should keep on getting stronger and more intimate, or more personal, as the solidarity of the members of the group of facilitators grows into a close community.

D. Understanding the Community and Learning from the People

An essential part of the formation of facilitators is their appreciation and their understanding of the lives of the learners. It is in the daily realities of people's lives that the experience of power and of oppression become real. The facilitator needs to be very close to the community in order to understand that:

> ... (se trata) de crear mecanismos a partir de la naturaleza del grupo para que ellos hagan conjuntamente con el aprendizaje de ESL una experiencia de poder en algo que como el inglés afecta profundamente sus vidas: ¿De qué manera hacerlo? A través de la observación militante del grupo humano, de su dinámica, de sus perspectivas, de su cotidiano esencial, para

determinar muy concretamente los puntos de opresión ult. aconcretos en el día a día de las personas. (Marcelo Zwierzynski, Instituto del Progreso Latino.)[1]

Facilitators who are not members of the community in which their students live, and who do not have a similar economic and cultural background, have much to learn from that community. There is a richness of culture and language to be discovered. There are realities of housing and markets and child care and cantinas and the little place around the corner where the kids go to buy their paletas. Where do people go to find work? Do they have to travel a long way? Are there jobs to be found? What's it like in the workplace? Are there health care services in the community? What language is spoken in the clinic? Where do kids go to school? What's that like?

If we are talking about a community of immigrants living within the mainland U.S., then there is a host of feelings about living up here in this foreign land, and even stronger feelings about the home they left behind. There's a whole set of fears and hopes for their future, and for their children's future.

Yet these "facts" about a community only scratch the surface. A community is a dynamic, living, breathing entity. To really understand, one has to live there, to live as part of a family there, to be a participant in that life. Even then, an outsider has the freedom to leave that place, and that possibility of exit makes voluntary poverty not at all the same. Nevertheless, for those who want to really learn, living the life of the people, with the people, is the best way.

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1 The idea is to create mechanisms beginning with the nature of the group so that they can have, along with their learning of ESL (or other subjects), an experience of power in something which profoundly affects their lives. How do you do this? Through the militant observation of the human group, of their dynamic, of their perspectives, of the essence of their daily lives, in order to determine very concretely the ultra concrete points of oppression in the day-to-day lives of the persons.

Prime Minister Maurice Bishop of Grenada spoke to the young literacy volunteers in his country about the importance of becoming one with the people in the community. He says it better than anyone else — he describes the ideal.

> This whole question of integrating yourself with your learner is obviously of great importance. It is not by accident after all that the Cubans, when they embarked in their literacy campaign in 1960, decided that they must close down their school system for twelve months and free up the schools — take all the students, take all the teachers send them into the mountains and into the bushes to teach the learners. Why? Because it was felt quite correctly that it would be a lot more difficult to try to get these learners to come to centres and be taught there. It would be much better if it were possible to send the volunteer teachers right into the homes of the learners so that they become fully integrated with the learner. They stay in the house, they sleep in the house, they eat in the house, they get up in the morning and they go out to work with the particular learner. They return home at lunch they have lunch with him, they go back out in the evening and on the nights when the learner says "well, I tired no more lessons for me" you just close the book and you go to sleep too. And the night when he says "let we go down to town they have a fete in the village" you do down in town and you fete too. And the night when he says "is time to fire one" you fire one too. On the night when he says "let us play dominoes," you play dominoes too. That is really fully integrating yourself with the learner and that is showing maximum respect for the learner, and a recognition of the problems the learner has. It is also a way of yourself learning something from the learner, because while we have the book knowledge and the certification, we do not always have the education. Let us always make a fundamental difference between 'certification' and 'education' — they are not the same things. And those poor, humble learners do have a lot to teach us. They have great experience, they have vast, vast, vast reservoirs of practical knowledge, and they do have an approach to life, an approach to the world, an approach to their country that will tell us a lot about where we have come from and therefore where we can go and how fast we can go when we want to go. We can learn something from these learners."
>
> — From the address by Prime Minister Cde. Maurice Bishop, C.P.E. Evaluation Congress Report, October 18, 1980, Grenada.

In Nicaragua, literacy volunteers followed the pattern set by the volunteers in Cuba and Grenada. One of the most eloquent statements about a learner teaching the facilitator was made by a Nicaraguan peasant speaking to the mother of his young literacy teacher:

> Do you know I am not ignorant any more. I know how to read now. Not perfectly, you understand, but I know how. And do you know, your son isn't ignorant any more either. Now he knows how we live, what we eat, how we work and he knows the life of the mountains. Your son, ma'am, has learned to read from our book. ("Nicaragua 1980: The Battle of the ABC's" by Fernando Cardenal, S.J., and Valerie Miller, Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 51, No. 1, 1981.)

Not all of our facilitators are free to leave their families and to live as full participants in the community of the learners. Facilitators who can't live in the community nevertheless need to have some way to familiarize themselves with the lives of the people in more than just a superficial way.

In Brazil, as a first step, Freire suggested that teams of educators go into the community to talk to people as a way of researching their vocabulary. This was a way to identify "generative words" which would later become the basis for dialogue. As he describes these "informal encounters" with the people, he says:

> These interviews reveal longings, frustrations, disbeliefs, hopes, and an impetus to participate. During this initial phase the team of educators form rewarding relationships and discover often unsuspected exuberance and beauty.... (Education for a Critical Consciousness, p. 49.)

Nina Wallerstein, author of Language and Culture in Conflict, describes this process as "an approach much like anthropological fieldwork," and says that "everyone — students and teachers — participates in it on an ongoing and equal basis." Nina has some very specific suggestions of things that a facilitator new to a community can do to learn from the people. In addition to informal conversations and paying attention to nonverbal communication, Nina suggests:

> Take a walk through your students' community. When you get home, write down what you saw. Anthropologists employ this technique to get a general overview, and then to focus on activities that seem particularly meaningful.
>
> Take photographs of their neighborhood. The fixed, flat field of a still photo will enable you to see many more parts of the reality that you are observing. Your naked eye is simply very selective.

Draw a map of the houses and buildings in the area. How far away is the grocery store? Who goes there? How are the prices? The array and the quality of the food? What does it feel like inside?

Visit your students in their houses. After you leave, write down what you saw. Perhaps they would allow you to take pictures inside....

Be systematic about it. If you take a walk through the community at the same time on the same day every week, you will see more deeply than if you go at random, unrelated times. If you visit the same streetcorner at three different times on the same day, you will have the pieces necessary to begin to see patterns which you can discuss with your students.

It is obvious that this takes time. Give it time, even if it is only a little time, on a regular basis. The investment is well worth it. (From an unpublished paper by Nina Wallerstein and Pia Moriarty These ideas are treated in further detail in Nina's book, Language and Culture in Conflict. See section on Resources).

Somehow, as a part of the formation program, and as one of the early experiences, you need to address the issue of understanding the lives and the culture of the learners. Becoming familiar with the realities of the community in which the learners live is essential. However you decide to do it, it's probably important to choose a way that will get people out into the barrio so that they can talk to people, interact, participate in the life of the community to the fullest extent that makes sense in your situation. Just exactly how you decide to do that depends on the needs of the facilitators, the extent of their own personal distance from the lives of the learners. If some of the learners are involved in planning this part of the formation program, they are sure to add some rich and creative ways to introduce their own community's realities to the facilitators. But don't stop at the dialogue! Get people out there, into the waiting rooms of the clinic, into the bars and grocery stores, into the employment office or the public aid interview, into people's kitchens and back porches. Your limits are bounded by the curiosity of the facilitators and the interest and invitation of the learners working with them. Make time for this to happen, and remember it's not just a one-time thing.

E. Political and Economic Analysis: Identifying with the Oppressed

Familiarity with the realities of the lives of the people in the community is essential but is not enough. What is vital is a deep understanding of the political-economic context in which the facilitators are working. Whether or not the facilitators live in the community and share the culture and the financial hardships of the learners, a critical analysis of that political and economic reality forms a firm basis for later interaction and analytical work with their learners.

> It is not that methods and techniques are not important. But they must serve the objectives contained in a cultural plan.... In our formation seminars for teachers we have not emphasized methods and techniques, but, rather, political clarity. (Letters, p. 78.)

If facilitators themselves are participants in an analytical process examining their own lives, their own realities, from a political and economic point of view, they will be better prepared to facilitate such an analysis together with the learners.

Facilitators in the liberatory education projects in this country are in various stages of concientización. Even within one project there may be considerable diversity in terms of political clarity. Everyone is at some point along the road of concientización. Some new facilitators who are worker-immigrants still see themselves as hard-working individuals, who, if they play the game right, will "make it" within the system here. Their personal goal is to "get ahead." That's why they came up here in the first place. Others, who come from the middle class, or who have become "middle class" through studying at the university, understand the roots of the oppression which is suffered by the members of the Third World, but don't consider themselves oppressed.

Emma Ramos Diaz, whose expertise is in peer counseling, begins this process of political and economic analysis with the recognition of internalized oppression. Participants in the seminar begin by sharing, either with the whole group, or in pairs, occasions in their lives when they have felt exploited, when they have experienced oppression. From there, commonalities are noted, and an analysis begins of the causes behind the shared experiences.

In some groups, this is a difficult place to begin. Sharing of personal experiences of oppression, especially if they date back to childhood or adolescence, are so painful that getting in touch with them, much less sharing them, might be very threatening in the beginning.

Sometimes it's easier to begin by focusing on an object, or on a graphic representation of an instance of oppression. Freire calls this "coding." In his work with peasants in Brazil, he began with drawings related to the realities of the people's lives. (Copies of the coding used by Freire in those early years can be found in Education for Critical Consciousness and also in Cynthia Brown's Literacy in 30 Hours.) A code doesn't have to be a drawing; a photograph, slides, a story, a film, can all be useful as the focus for beginning a dialogue.

To do this successfully, the formation coordinator has to be very familiar with the facilitator's lives and concerns in order to bring in a coding that will be useful. In Letters to Guinea-Bissau, Freire gives a very clear description of the use of coding (pp. 92-94). He stresses the importance of choosing a code that is neither too simple and obvious, nor so enigmatic and obscure that it becomes like "some kind of puzzle to be solved."

The coding becomes the stimulus for analytical dialogue among the participants. The role of the formation coordinator, in this case, is to pose questions to guide the discussion. Although the sequence of the stages in the dialogue isn't always the same, most people who are working with coding or "codification" follow a pattern something like this:

1. Talk about the "superficial structure" of the coding. Look at what's immediately perceived. What's happening in the picture? Who's in the picture, and what are they doing?

2. Define the problem represented in the picture. What are the conflicts here? How are people relating to one-another? What's the relationship between the persons represented and the objects there? How do the characters feel in this situation?

3. Relate the problem situation to the participants' own lives. Does it apply to them? Have they had similar experiences? How do they feel?

4. Analyze the problem, view it in a larger perspective. Look at the causes and the consequences of it. Why does it occur? What has led up to it? What might happen if this continues to go on?

5. Think of possible ways to resolve the problem. Look at the available resources, and ways that people have tried to resolve the problem in the past. Begin to strategize for organized action.

This five-step problem-posing sequence has been used by the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program in Philadelphia and by Nina Wallerstein in her ESL book.

Deborah Barndt, in her book, Education and Social Change: A Photographic Study of Peru (pp. 199-204) describes a very similar process broken down into seven stages, with personal association coming immediately after the description of the situation, and before the examination of the problem and its contradictions. Critical action is so important, that in Barndt's view, it is a separate stage in the dialogue, beyond the exploration of alternative solutions to the problem.

Valerie Miller, in writing about the literacy campaign in Nicaragua, describes a five-step process that's somewhat different. The study of problems in Nicaragua occurs in a very different context — in the context of revolutionary transformation, where organizations and structures are being created to foster community participation in planning and development. Valerie emphasizes that the revolutionary context is what's most important, and warns that it is dangerous to single out the five-step process as just a technique or method without working with it within part of a larger political framework.

The following dialogue question guide, prepared for the young Nicaraguan literacy volunteers in the first weeks of the literacy campaign, was not used as a rigid model, but did help people to stimulate a dialogue.

Dialogue Question Guide

(as used in Nicaragua in the literacy campaign)

Activities	Example
1. Description of photograph	• Who appears in the photo? • What are they doing? • Where are they?
2. Analysis of photo	• Why are they there? • For what concrete purpose are they there?
3. Relationship of situation portrayed in photo to real life of the literacy learners.	• At this moment does this situation exist in your community? • Since when has it existed? • Why does it exist? • What activities are being conducted in your community related to this situation? • What are the problems involved in this situation? • What are the causes of these problems?
4. Search for solutions	• How can we solve the problems
5. Group commitment to transformation	• What can we do as a group in order to solve the problems? • What do we promise and commit ourselves to doing?

The selecting of appropriate codes is not simple, and needs to be done with care. Preparing good drawings or photographs or slides, complex enough not to be obvious, and based on the expressed concerns of the learners, takes time and talent. (Of course, when we say "learners" in this context, we're talking about the future facilitators, the facilitators-in-formation.) If you pre-determine the codings you will use before the formation program begins, you lose the opportunity to base them on the concerns which the facilitator-learners identify. If you wait until the cooperative planning has begun, then you have very little

time to prepare good quality codings! In this regard, we have something to learn from the Nicaraguan experience. The volunteer facilitators there encountered some difficulty in the beginning in promoting critical dialogue; they discovered that some of the photos they were using were not always appropriate for stimulating discussion. A couple of the first photos in the literacy materials, which had been prepared and printed ahead of time, represented historical figures, images too removed from the personal lives of the participants to engage them easily in a thoughtful dialogue.

There is an advantage to using codes as part of the process of political/economic analysis in facilitator formation — as facilitators analyze their own reality, they are also experiencing a process and a tool that they may choose to use later on in their own groups. It combines analysis with the learning of a facilitating technique. Freire envisions a learning situation in which the learners start to come up with their own codings.

> Another point we could work on together ... is how to motivate the learners so that they will also be able to do some coding in teams. Each team would then lead the discussion of their own codings. (Letters, p. 94.)

Ira Shor prefers to begin not with a picture but with the real thing. In his book, Critical Teaching and Everyday Life, he talks about starting with real, concrete objects, ordinary things that everybody uses in their everyday life. He uses things people can touch, feel, turn upside-down, hold in their hands. He uses what's already in the classroom, like a chair. Or he brings in something hot and smelly from the cafeteria, like a greasy hamburger. He once wanted to use a car, because "car" is such a gutsy part of the lives of the young worker-students in his part of New York, but rejected that idea because he couldn't bring a car into his classroom. A picture of a car just wouldn't do.

What does he do with the thing? He uses it as the focal point for political/economic analysis, in a problem-solving method that begins with a three-step process of describing, diagnosing, and reconstructing. This is not unlike the "decoding" processes described above.

Shor and his students spend a long time examining the object under scrutiny. Paying attention to the minute detail of ordinary things that are taken for granted and never really LOOKED at is a revealing exercise. When the "diagnosis" begins, Shor asks questions that lead the students to think about who made the thing, why they made it like they did, and for whose benefit it was made that way.

> With the chair carefully described, I then ask the class to attempt a social diagnosis. This part of the method has been very revealing. The familiar object under us turns out to be full of problems. At the very lease, it's uncomfortable. Who designed it like that? Surely, the students wouldn't design or choose an uncomfortable chair for themselves. Whoever designed and selected it had certain things in mind when constructing and ordering a chair like this. We examine the social context of the chair in order to go beneath its appearance. As conceptual detectives, in dialogue, we discover that the chair functions to force a student's attention and conversation towards the teacher. (Some classes have spontaneously remedied this by suggesting we sit in a circle.) When these chairs are aligned in rows, they make it hard to rotate and speak to or look at your peers. The chair is a hard, unyielding object, so it's difficult to relax in. Why are you prevented from relaxing in class? Because you'll fall asleep, students answer. Why will you fall asleep if the chair is comfortable? You don't fall asleep at the movies or at home, when you sit in a comfortable chair, so why will you do it here? Because the teacher is boring, they answer. So, if the teacher is boring and puts you to sleep, the answer is to punish you with a chair that keeps you awake, instead of punishing the teacher for being a bore. Why not change the teacher so that education is exciting and inspiring? Do people fall asleep when they are being offered something they really want? As we dialogue, we focus on the hard, small writing surface bolted on to each chair. In the old days, wooden desks allowed you to distract yourself by carving names and graffiti, but these new chairs eliminate that. The chair's discomfort and impermeable surface are joined by the bland colors, as hindrances to distraction. The right construction also prevents slouching, reclining, leaning over and foot-crossing. By now, the chair is no ordinary part of the classroom furnishings. It is emerging as a symbol of oppression. It is being perceived as a discipline-device in which students must sit upright, stiff and attentive, in front of a teacher whose activity does not deserve the attention demanded from students. The college chose this chair for its students, but for sure the President and his deans do not sit on chairs like this. A quite simple lesson in authoritarian rule grows from the recognition that the people who must use the chair did not choose it, while the people who choose it are not required to use it. A method which began with the simple observation of an ordinary object has begun to raise consciousness and uncover the deep ideology of daily life. (Critical Teaching and Everyday Life, pp. 159-160.)

Shor is working within the context of a public school system. Facilitators working within alternative community education centers would probably find themselves and their adult learners taking a slightly different path in the analysis of the chair. But the basic questions are the same. Freire asks them, too. In his meeting with the members of the Alternative Schools Network in Chicago in 1977, Freire talks about the relevance of examining potatoes and the process of planting potatoes. He grants that there is no "Communist" way of planting potatoes, and no "Capitalist" way, and yet there are some good questions that can be asked of people who spend a lot of their time handling potatoes.

> For me, in the process of knowing how to cultivate potatoes there is something which goes beyond the agricultural aspects of cultivating potatoes.... Who? For whom? How? In the question how to cultivate, which is a methodological one, we have different aspects. We have not only, for example, the methods of planting, but also the question which has to do with the role of those who plant potatoes in the process of producing, for what we plant potatoes, in favor of whom.... (Literacy in 30 Hours, Cynthia Brown, p. 63.)

Those same questions, Who? What? For what? Why? How? In favor of whom? keep cropping up, no matter what the object is that's being examined. At Universidad Popular in Chicago, immigrant students who had worked in banana fields in their home country were astonished at the prices of bananas on sale here in the U.S. Those same questions focused on the banana can give rise to economic analysis in many different directions.

Shor also extends his analysis of concrete objects into global perspectives. Although he had rejected the car because it couldn't be brought into the classroom, he does come up with some excellent questions about it in an international study.

> Does it exist in France, China or Afghanistan? Does our use of cars affect life elsewhere on the planet? Are building materials from other countries used? Are they built elsewhere? What do other countries do with or without cars? Why do they build them there and sell them here? Why would other countries send out raw materials to build cars someplace else? Who organizes this kind of system? (Critical Teaching and Everyday Life, p. 165.)

Shor has his students examine the object in terms of time, first in recent time — "When was it built? How does it change over time as you use it? What determines how long you can use it?" — and then in its historical and future time — "When did it first enter human history? What did it replace? Why did it appear when it did? Has it changed since then? Who brought it into being and why? What will it look like ten or twenty years from now?" (pp. 165-166).

When Shor works with items that have been manufactured or processed here in this country, the third step in his problem-solving method is to reconstruct the object. Students are asked to use their creativity to "redesign" the object, "so that it negates the worst features discovered in the Diagnosis." In the process of describing a redesigned piece of public school furniture, or a redesigned food service system to replace the fast food hamburger "empire" his students begin to envision the world working in a different kind of way, serving humanity a little bit better. "It calls upon the students to re-invent the thing being studied, so that the future will not reproduce the present."

An advantage to focusing political/economic analysis on actual objects instead of codings (or as well as codings), is that the participants in the program can bring in their own things — things they were persuaded to buy by the media, products they make at work, other items from their daily life that <u>they</u> see as relevant to a political and economic analysis.

Another analytical method uses neither codings nor objects, and yet focuses the study on a graphic representation produced on the spot together with the participants. The "Ah-hah" seminar developed by GATT-Fly (an inter-church initiative for global economic justice up in Toronto) is a useful tool for political-economic analysis. The objective of an "Ah-hah" workshop is to help a popular group do its own economic, political and social analysis so that it can be more effective in action for social justice. The goal is clearly action. Instead of focusing on a coding or object brought in by the facilitator, in this method the facilitator and the participants construct a visual model, using cartoon drawings and symbols, based on the experience and the knowledge of the participants. As people describe their lives and their work, little drawings are put up on the

newsprint, representing each factory with its name, the unemployment office, the stores, the schools, whatever aspects of their lives people feel should be up there. The participants in the groups help decide how to draw the representations of these parts of their lives. You don't have to be an artist!

After constructing a picture of the participants' reality, the dialogue of the group begins to link that immediate reality to the larger picture of the economic, political, social and cultural structures that make up the community, the country and the world. These links are also drawn into the picture. The drawing is a point of reference and a point of departure, not an end in itself. The role of the facilitator is one of asking critical questions, first to reflect critically on the picture they have drawn, and then to develop action strategies. In a book to be published this summer called, AH-HAH SEMINARS: Experiences in Education for Action, the GATT-Fly facilitators share points in the dialogue brought out by their questioning:

Reflect critically on the picture by

a) examining the causes of particular injustices;
b) asking questions about power, such as, "Who decides?", "Who pays?", "Who benefits?";
c) drawing connections between issues and between social groups;
d) showing the interaction between economic and social, cultural or political factors;
e) testing the experiences of group members by comparing them against the experiences of others or introducing factual data;
f) making generalizations and noting exceptions;
g) looking at the historical dimension; and
h) sharing personal stories and experiences.

Developing action strategies by

a) identifying long term and short term objectives;
b) sharing and evaluating experiences of working for change;
c) identifying obstacles;
d) determining whether initial steps advance or hinder long term goals by empowering or demobilizing people;

e) identifying potential allies and bases for joint action; and

f) developing specific action strategies that can be implemented.

> We do not treat this line of questioning as a formula to be applied step by step. Rather we let the dialogue flow back and forth. Connections to the larger picture are drawn as they arise from the discussion. A discussion of the causes of a particular social problem, such as unemployment, may suggest going back to the drawing to add parts of the system or actors that had not yet been incorporated. Recording the discussion in picture form allows for moving back and forth between description, analysis and action discussions without confusing the group. (AH-HAH SEMINARS: Experiences in Education for Action.)

The book describes some 80 seminars held since 1975, and includes a report on a seminar with Latin American immigrant workers held in Toronto in 1978. The report is excellent, providing a copy of the drawings they constructed there, as well as a summary of the dialogue.

A program in facilitator formation might consider giving facilitators an experience in any one or in all three of these ways of approaching a political/economic analysis. The formation seminar doesn't necessarily have to begin with this analysis, if the facilitators' initial priorities are on something else. The important point is that it happen somewhere in the course of the formation experience

F. Practice in Skills, Methods, and Techniques

It was late in the afternoon. The newly trained facilitator walked into the adult education project office in a South American town and announced proudly, "Concientice a 20 personas hoy. Y mañana voy a concientizar a 20 personas más!"[1] Somehow, he missed the boat. "Where did we go wrong?" asked the training staff.

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[1] I "conscienticized" 20 people today. And tomorrow I'm going to "conscientize" 20 people more.

The trainers were group dynamics experts from a North American university, creative people, steeped in group process theory, with countless numbers of exercises, games and activities up their sleeves. It hadn't been enough.

Concientización is a political act. Technique alone isn't enough to make it happen. Skills and methods and games are not adequate to the task of transforming society.

BUT, an understanding of how groups operate can be enormously helpful.

Sometimes, dialogue breaks down. The facilitator needs to know what to do in order to enable everyone to participate in the process. Freire makes references to group dynamics in the little essays to facilitators at the back of Sanchez's book:

> Durante las discusiones haga lo posible para que todo el grupo participe...
>
> Durante las discusiones, aproveche las respuestas reformulando nuevas preguntas al grupo. Interésese con el grupo. En lo posible hágase uno entre ellos. Jamás hable mucho de sus experiencias personales, excepto cuando tenga algo de interés para la discusión....
>
> En todo grupo hay siempre algunos que hablan de más y otros que hablan poco. Estimule a ambos a llegar al equilibrio. (Freire, Una Pedagogía para el Adulto, S. Sanchez, p. 56 .)[1/]

Having good intentions and the will to bring the group to equilibrium is one thing. Making it happen is another. Knowing how to do that is not something that comes automatically to all of us. Ronald Hyman says it well; reflecting with colleagues and students on their experiences in groups, Hyman made a discovery:

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1 During the discussions do everything possible to get the whole group to participate.

During the discussions, make use of the responses, reformulating new questions for the group. Involve yourself with the group. Make yourself one of them as much as possible. Never speak much about your own personal experiences, except when they have something of interest pertinent to the discussion.

In every group there are always some who speak too much and others who speak little. Stimulate both to arrive at an equilibrium.

> What came to light was the "emperor's clothes" phenomenon. That is, for years many people have believed that discussion is a valid and beneficial approach to teaching and group thinking. Yet, virtually no one receives training in leading a discussion, a highly complex set of frequent interactions among people. Moreover, few people readily admit that they lack the training they need primarily because, I believe, it never dawns on them that training in such a common activity is needed or even helpful. After all, just as we do not usually get training in such common and fundamental skills as listening and speaking, neither do we need training in discussion leading. Only when faced with the realization that excellent discussion leading is a skill and not as simple to perform as many untrained people think, do people admit that they need some help in improving their ability to conduct a discussion. (Improving Discussion Leadership, Ronald Hyman, pp. ix-x.)

I am not an expert on group dynamics. Rather than pretend that I know something and try to explain something here about group process, I prefer to refer you to the many excellent books that have been written about how groups operate, about the role of the facilitator in the group's interaction. Some good ones are listed as resources at the back of this book, in Chapter V, part C. There, you will also find references to material that presents samples of actual group exercises that have worked well with others.

It is important to remember that such sample exercises are not recommended with a view toward copying them. It would be a mistake to plan a workshop by deciding, in advance, which exercises you are going to use. However, when that moment arrives in your group of facilitators, when they recognize that they have a problem interacting within their own group, when they express a desire to focus on their own interaction for a while, in order to be more productive and also in order to think about group dynamics, then, yes, it would be very helpful for you, as formation coordinator, to be able to say, "There are some exercises we could do to help us clarify what is going on here. Would you like to try a few?"

Perhaps two things can go on simultaneously — focus on content (political analysis of the community, strategizing for action, figuring out how to apply Freire's ideas to a GED algebra class)... and at the same time pay attention to the dynamics of the group while it's talking about the content. Perhaps there could always be a small group of observers and reporters chosen from among the

facilitators who, instead of participating in the dialogue for that hour, could observe the interaction of the group and then give feedback....

What do you think?

G. On-Going Practice, Observation and Reflection

The orientation workshops, the initial dialogues among facilitators, can go on for only so long. Time is short in most projects, where even a weekend seminar for facilitators is a luxury. But even if there were unlimited time available for dialogue and preparation in the beginning, the formation experiences would be incomplete in isolation from the community of learners. Eventually the facilitator steps into a group of learners and begins. BUT THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE FACILITATOR'S FORMATION!! It is only a beginning of the action part of the facilitator's praxis. One of the most important parts of the facilitator's formation is the actual interaction with the participants in the circle, and the process of reflection afterwards.

In this process of action and reflection, facilitators need a lot of support, especially in the beginning.

Good insight on this matter comes from Ed Sunshine, whom I know and respect through his involvement in the Mexican immigrant community in Chicago. Ed first started working with Freire's ideas in Chile in 1970, and has continued to work with adult groups ever since. About the formation of facilitators, Ed says:

> You learn about Freire's method by doing it. I would tell anyone who wants to learn about Freire that he/she should first be in contact with a group in a learning situation. Without that context, the theory does not make sense. Secondly, I would urge that person to be in contact, if possible, with someone who understands and has experience with the method. Thirdly, I would tell that person to have extreme patience with the group.... The hard part comes from the nuances, the surprises, the unexpected problems, the confusion, the silence when there should be enthusiasm. That is why outside counsel and patience are so important.

Ed speaks of the need for "outside counsel" once the facilitating has begun. Freire, addressing the same needs of beginning facilitators, refers to "supervision."

> The period of instruction must be followed by dialogical supervision, to avoid the temptation of anti-dialogue on the part of the coordinators. (Education for a Critical Consciousness, p. 52.)

Whether we call it counsel or supervision, we're talking about some kind of support structure for facilitators as they engage in their work.

A good way to do this is to arrange for an on-going series of workshops or seminars in which all facilitators participate in order to help one another. Some projects here are already doing this. For example, at Universidad Popular in Chicago, the week is scheduled in such a way that facilitators are able to meet together every Friday for on-going formation seminars. At Solidaridad Humana in New York, all facilitators involved in the Adult Basic Education Program meet together once a week to share experiences. People talk about what's happening in the classrooms, about individual problems, and student problems. Facilitators help one another, sharing materials and giving suggestions, "Try this, try that."

Freire refers to such regular meetings as "systematic evaluation seminars," and sees the on-going process as a "powerful force" in overcoming inevitable mistakes. In December of 1975, Freire wrote a letter to a group of facilitators in Guinea-Bissau in which he discussed the potential of regular seminars. (He used the word "coordinator" interchangeably with "facilitator." Don't be confused.)

> I wonder whether you are able to hold systematic evaluation seminars with the coordinators in which you and they examine the experience of all — the difficulties you have met and the manner in which you have attempted to respond to these. Certain difficulties are always repeated; it is important that all of the coordinators become informed about how the others confront these. This makes for a common learning base that stimulates the creativity of all.

> In these seminars, for example, some of the authoritarian tendencies of some of the facilitators as well as some of the unexpected mistakes of others can be considered.... (Letters to Guinea-Bissau, pp. 96, 97

It would be unfortunate to limit the point of these seminars to only correcting negative behavior, to considering just "authoritarian tendencies" and "unexpected mistakes." If we did only that we would be missing a wonderful opportunity to recognize and share strengths, and to delight in one another's creativity.

When it comes to sharing experiences and helping one another, we know that some facilitators do have more experience than others with Freire's methods, that some may have a deeper understanding of what is called "liberating education," and that some have a clearer political-economic analysis than others. It is important to recognize those strengths and to be enriched through a sharing of that experience and depth. Yet it is a mistake to think that only the most experienced can help the beginners, or to think that a beginning facilitator has little to contribute to the others who've been at it longer.

Freire himself made special note of the creative imagination he observed among new facilitators in Guinea-Bissau and delights in telling the story of the facilitator who introduced the word "clean" by sweeping the classroom with a broom. (Letters to Guinea-Bissau, p. 28). This is an idea that probably would not have occurred to Freire, would not have been his style, yet he was able to appreciate the warmth and ingenuity of the facilitator's dramatization and to learn from him.

It is important to look at these regular seminars not just as a way to support and guide the beginners, but as a healthy and necessary means of growth for the whole community of facilitators in each project.

Participation in these seminars doesn't have to be limited to facilitators, but can be opened to learners as well.

> These evaluation seminars can also include some of the learners. Their presence can be justified on two basic grounds: what is being discussed in these seminars is something in which they are

> involved as subjects just as the coordinators are; also, through such meetings the training process can be deepened. Among the learners are tomorrow's facilitators... . (Letters, p. 97).

Participation of the learners in the process of facilitators' formation also helps us to remember that as facilitators, we have much to learn from the students. Their evaluation of our work, their ideas about how we can improve, their sharing of their reality and their needs, are vitally important.

It is interesting the way Freire links formation of facilitators with evaluation and with action.

> The task of evaluation is a means of formation and, as such, is intimately linked to the search for new forms of action. Looking at one's own practice as a problem provides the critical moment in evaluation. The subjects of the practice can thus go back over what has been done in order to confirm or to rectify it in this or that aspect, enriching subsequent practice and being enriched by it.... (Letters, p. 97.)

Evaluation, as Freire sees it within the context of facilitator formation, is not solely the responsibility of the administration, as it usually is in most traditional schools. Evaluation here is everyone's responsibility, as each participant, each "subject" reflects on their practice. The idea of an on-going process of formation, linked with continuing reflection and evaluation, makes it clear that facilitators' formation is not something that eventually is finished or completed. Even the most experienced facilitators who've worked at Freire's side in Africa or in South America are not "finished," but continue to reflect on their own practice, and continue to learn from the learners and from other facilitators. It's a humbling thought.

Observations

In addition to regular evaluation seminars, facilitators can help one another through peer observations, followed by reflective dialogue. I'm referring here to mutually supportive and reciprocal observation and feedback, not to what happens in traditional schools, where there are usually only two kinds of one-way

observation: student teachers observe the experienced "professional," and administrators observe beginning teachers. The latter kind of observation is almost always anxiety-producing.

Certainly, it remains useful for beginning facilitators to observe those with more experience, in order to benefit from a good model. And it is helpful for beginners to receive feedback from experienced facilitators who've observed their interaction with learners.

But beginners can observe one another, too, and the feedback in the reflective dialogue can be very helpful. And the feedback from a beginner-observer given to an experienced facilitator can be amazingly useful.

> Authentic help means that all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in the common effort to understand the reality which they seek to transform. Only through such praxis — in which those who help and those who are being helped help each other simultaneously — can the act of helping become free from the distortion in which the helper dominates the helped. (Letters, p.8

It isn't easy. In the beginning, most people are anxious about having an observer in the room, and sometimes feel as though they're being judged. Also, in the beginning, the new facilitator who is observing isn't sure what to look for, what to observe.

One way to deal with both the anxiety of the person being observed and the uncertainty of the observer is for the two to meet before the class, to set some objectives for the observation that is about to take place. It helps if the person who is going to facilitate has some specific questions in advance that they'd like answered by the observer. For example, when I'm facilitating I sometimes get so caught up in the content of the discussion that I forget to notice if everyone is participating. I might ask an observer to watch the participants in the circle and to pay attention to those who are not active. Agreeing to focus the observation on the participants in the beginning helps relieve the facilitator from feeling "on stage."

Later on, the facilitator who feels more confident may want to switch the focus to facilitator behavior. The facilitator who is working on improving skills in asking questions, for example, might ask the observer to note the different kinds of questions that the facilitator asks during the class.

In this way, with the facilitator requesting certain information before the observation takes place, the observer is clearly there to help and to learn, not to judge. And the observer is helped by having a specific task to do.

It's most helpful if the facilitator and the observer-facilitator meet immediately after the class to talk about what happened, while the dynamics of the group are still fresh and alive.

For every facilitator who is observing, it is essential to maintain a humble and objective attitude. Freire, in his visits to Guinea-Bissau, spent many hours observing the circles of learners and facilitators in action. His account of his attitude during these visits is very helpful:

> At the stage at which we found ourselves — that of seeing and listening, asking and discussing, it was essential for us to observe how things were going in the Circles, among the participants and the literacy workers. We wanted to see both the creative aspects of their work and those instances where, on the contrary, they might be engaged merely in repetition and memorization....
>
> It is important to note that our attitude in visiting the Culture Circles was neither that of persons inclined to overestimate what we were seeing, nor were we like those so attached to ideal models that they cannot see the distance between those ideals and concrete reality. We felt neither uncontained euphoria in the face of good work nor negativity regarding the mistakes that we might encounter. What was important was to see what might really be happening under the limited material conditions we knew existed. We wanted to discover what could be done better under these conditions, and if this were not possible, to consider ways to improve the conditions themselves....
>
> The lack of ... mistakes would really have surprised us, especially since the time given to training and theoretical formation of the workers had been so short.

> If our attitude in visiting the Culture Circles had been one of the two referred to above — easy euphoria in the face of what was effective or negativity in the face of mistakes — we might have idealized all that we saw or decreed the whole experiment invalid. In either case, we would have been wrong. (Letters, p. 27-29.)

Administrators! The important message here is to provide a structure which enables facilitators to get together and talk to each other on a frequent and regular basis. It is imperative that facilitators have the opportunity for regular dialogue about what's happening in their interaction with the learners.

It's not realistic to assume that this is going to happen automatically. Schedules have to be arranged to set aside a specific time for reflective dialogue. This is of primary importance. Facilitator formation is an on-going process that's never finished; we all have much to learn from one another, and we need reflective dialogue with one another to grow as a healthy community of learning facilitators.

IV.

RECOGNIZING THE HARDSHIPS AND THE REALITIES

If the ideas put forward in the preceding chapters seem simplistic or obvious, they are not necessarily easy to put into practice. Liberatory education projects in this country are operating within realities in which there are time constraints, funding crises, and the contradictions inherent in any struggle for social change and action within the capitalist system. There often seem to be real obstacles to having good programs of facilitator formation.

The time factor is probably the most universal problem. There just doesn't seem to be enough time for people to meet. Many good facilitators are busy people, already actively involved in other community projects. Some have family obligations and pressures to further their own education. Many, in these hard times, have to work another job to make ends meet. It's hard to find the right weekday evening or the right hour on a Saturday morning or afternoon that's convenient and possible for all facilitators on a regular basis. And yet nothing can happen until that mutually convenient time is identified, and until the commitment is made to ALL to participate in facilitator group formation for the duration of their involvement with the project.

Budget limitations present another problem. Few projects have money to pay facilitators for "staff development" time. Funding sources for adult education programs too often restrict part time hourly wages in such a way that facilitators can only receive payment for the time they spend actually in class with their students. This means that in many situations facilitators are asked to participate in a formation program as volunteers on their own time. This presents a genuine ha dship for many, especially now as the economic crunch in this country worsens.

Many, although not all, programs are trying to work within the system. Funding is sought from traditional sources within the government or the business community. Academic recognition is sought from the state education agencies. Funding sources and education agencies are often threatened by talk of "liberation" and social change. They ask for quantitative data in report form and want evaluative studies done according to their own objectives. The liberating education projects that find themselves a small part of large sponsoring organizations sometimes find themselves in conflict with executive directors and board members who have a different agenda. Administrators of liberatory education projects, in order to justify and keep afloat a facilitator formation program, have to juggle words and numbers in the game of proposals and reports with potentially hostile powers that often don't see why it's important. It takes a lot of energy and sometimes looks impossible.

It won't happen at all unless the project administrator gives a high priority to facilitator formation. But sometimes, with all good intentions, an administrator in a project, feeling very responsible, designs a facilitator formation program alone, not understanding that the process of collective decision-making is at the heart of the experience. It won't work well unless the administrator values the process of dialogue and action, and understands that change and growth take a long time, that it's an on-going and never-ending process.

Another complexity is that there are usually differences among individual members of any given group of facilitators. Different facilitators:

- are in differing phases of concientización,
- have varying levels of familiarity with the ideas of Paulo Freire,
- have different ethnic backgrounds, different cultural values,
- come from different class backgrounds,
- live at varying levels of economic comfort, and
- have varying levels of formal schooling.

Some facilitators lead lives very similar to those of their students. Others are quite different, in varying degrees. If there are differences like these

among the facilitators in a program, it means that there are different kinds of needs that have to be met in the formation experiences. The work of formation becomes considerably more complicated. Yet perhaps the diversity can become a richness if each person truly believes that he or she has something to learn from everybody else, as well as something to contribute.

There are plenty of hurdles — time, money, frustration of working within the system, administrators who sometimes don't understand, differences among facilitators. And yet it's imperative to find a way to get around the hurdles and make it happen, make it work, and make it last.

V

RESOURCES

Books and Articles by and about Paulo Freire

Freire, Paulo. Education for a Critical Consciousness. 1973. ($2.95 paper); Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea-Bissau. 1978. ($8.95); Pedagogy of the Oppressed. 1970. ($3.95). Seabury Press, Inc. 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

Freire has written more than just these three famous books, but all three of these are essential reading for facilitators in formation. Education for Critical Consciousness explains most clearly the details of the method of literacy and conscientization practices in Brazil, and includes drawings (not the originals) like those Freire used in the process. Letters to Guinea-Bissau is easy to read and addresses facilitators and coordinators of formation programs directly. Pedagogy of the Oppressed gives the reader a firm understanding of the political and pedagogical framework of Freire's ideas.

Brown, Cynthia. Literacy in 30 Hours: Paulo Freire's Process in North East Brazil. 1978. The Alternative Schools Network, 1105 W. Lawrence, Chicago, IL 60640. ($2.50).

This is a very clear explanation of Freire's method and political view of literacy. There are very good photographs of 8 of the original 10 drawings by Frencisco Brennand which Friere used in those early literacy classes. The book also includes interviews with Brenda Bay, Herbert Kohl, and Paulo Freire himself. 64 pp.

Collins, Denis. Paulo Freire: His Life, Works and Thought. 1977. The Paulist Press, 545 Island Road, Ramsey, NJ 07446 ($2.95).

This little volume is one of the best introductions to Freire's work. It is a good summary of major philosophical issues.

Jerêz, Cêsar, and Hernández-Picó, Juan. "Paulo Freire, Brazilian Adult Educator. A Literature Review." Originally published in Spanish in Estudios Centro Americanos, San Salvador (1971). Available in English from John Ohliger, 1121 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53715.

London, Jack. "Reflections Upon the Relevance of Paulo Freire for American Adult Education." Convergence, 6:1, 1973. International Council for Adult Education, 29 Prince Arthur, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B2, Canada.

Mackie, Robert, ed. *Literacy and Revolution: The Pedagogy of Paulo Freire.* *1981. The Continuum Publishing Company, 575 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. ($7.95).*

One of the most recent collections of articles on Freire, it is especially valuable for several chapters which critically examine Paulo Freire's politics.

Sánchez, Sebastián. *Freire, Una Pedagogía para el Adulto.* *1978. Zero, Hijos de E. Miguesa, S.L. Ronda de Toledo, 24, Madrid - 5, Spain (About $2.00).*

This book provides a clear and easy to understand explanation of Freire's ideas in Spanish. But the best part of the book may be in the Appendices, where there is a series of short essays by Freire, who speaks directly to the facilitator, giving very practical advice. It's a little book that every facilitator should read. 94 pp.

Two sources for extensive bibliographies on Freire:

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5S IV6, Canada
Attention: Carol Calder

Basic Choices, Inc.
1121 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53715
Attention: John Ohliger

Application of Freire in the U.S. and in other Countries, and Other Examples of Liberatory Education and Political-Economic Analysis

AH-HAH SEMINARS: Education for Empowerment. 1983. GATT-Fly, 11 Madison Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R, 2S2 (About $10.00).

This book describes GATT-Fly's experiences with an approach to adult education called the "Ah-Hah Seminar." Starting from the life and work experiences of a group of workers, farmers, fishermen or native people, each seminar develops an analysis of the economic and political system. The goal of the seminars is to develop action strategies for achieving social justice. This book reports on some of the 80 seminars held since 1975 and shares some reflections about adult education based on those experiences.

GATT-Fly is a project of Candian churches working for global economic justice. The name GATT-Fly is a play on the words *gadfly* and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which is an international trade forum instituted by the industrialized countries to reduce trade barriers and enlarge global markets. In a broader sense, GATT is a symbol of the global economic structures that work to enrich a few at the expense of the many.

Facilitators from GATT-Fly are willing and able to travel to give an "Ah-Hah" seminar. They usually charge $200 per day plus travel expenses, but they would consider making an exception; depending on the kind of work a group is doing and their financial circumstances, they might come out for just the cost of their travel expenses. Call Dennis Howlett at (416) 921-4615.

ALTERNATIVAS. Puerto Rican Center for Lifelong Studies, P.O. Box 424, Senorial Mall Station, Rio Piedras, PR 00926. Subscription rates for this monthly publication are $15 for individuals, $25 for university-based people, and $45 for government agencies. Or pay whatever you can afford.

Alternativas is an outgrowth of Educación Liberadora, which was the newsletter of IRCEL. (See below.) It is directed to persons engaged in the struggle for empowerment and liberation in the United States and Puerto Rico. Write to Blanca Facundo at the above address, or call her at (809) 760-6860.

Blanca continues to coordinate the network of liberatory education projects previously affiliated with IRCEL, and her office houses the materials which were gathered from the projects for the IRCEL resource center.

Bamat, Tom. Social Analysis and Research with Grassroots Groups: Basic Models and Approaches. 1981. Maryknoww Fathers and Brothers, Mission Research and Planning Dept., Maryknoww, New York 10545. (Free of charge.)

An excellent "primer" for political-economic analysis and community research. (68 pp.)

Barndt, Deborah. Education and Social Change: A Photographic Study of Peru. 1983. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 137 Main Street, Falmouth, MA 02540. ($19.95)

An in-depth case study of the personal and social change experienced by migrant women in an urban literacy program in a low-income area of Lima, Peru. Barndt describes her attempt to use a photo-novel in applying Paulo Freire's concept of conscientizacion. The book has an exquisite photo on nearly every page, but is even more exciting for the very clear analysis of Freire's work and ideas. 392 pp.

Barndt, Deborah. Just Getting There: Creating Visual Tools for Collective Analysis. Participatory Research Group, Room S417, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R, IV8. ($5.00)

The context is work in Freirian education programs for migrant women in Peru and in Canada. 50 pp., illustrated.

Coover, V., Deacon, E., Esser, C., and Moore, C. Resource Manual for a Living Revolution. 1977. Movement for a New Society, 4722 Baltimore Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

A good manual covering everything from consciousness-raising to organizing for change. It shows how group process exercises relate to the broader social struggle.

Descriptive Directory of Projects. 1981. IRCEL (Information and Resources Center for Educación Liberadora), c/o Alternativas, Puerto Rican Center for Lifelong Studies, P.O. Box 424, Senorial Mall Station, Rio Piedras, PR 00926.

This directory may be one of the most useful resources, because it can put you in touch with other real people who are in the campos and the barrios of the U.S. and Puerto Rico, working with the people, putting into practice the ideas of Educación Liberadora in many different ways. 28 projects are described. Addresses, phone numbers, and names of contact persons are provided.

Educación Liberadora was the newsletter of IRCEL (see below.) For back issues contact Alternativas, Puerto Rican Center for Lifelong Studies, P.O. Box 424, Senorial Mall Station, Rio Piedras, PR 00926.

The newsletter of Project IRCEL was sponsored by the Latino Institute and FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education). A total of 18 issues were published between September of 1980 and December, 1982. Since February, 1983, the newsletter has been continued in the form of Alternativas (see above description.)

IRCEL (Information and Resources Center for Educación Liberadora) was formerly a project of the Latino Institute's Research Division. Since February, 1983, the resource center has been re-located at Alternativas, Puerto Rican Center for Lifelong Studies, P.O. Box 424, Senorial Mall Station, Rio Piedras, PR 00926.

The resource center has a vast collection of materials produced by liberatory education projects in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as many articles written by or about Paulo Freire and about education for social change. Contact Blanca Facundo at the above address, or call her at (809) 760-6860.

Heaney, Tom. Adult Learning and Empowerment: Towards a Theory of Liberatory Education. Write directly to the author at 3838 N. Greenview, Chicago, IL 60613.

Kalmar, Tomás Mario. Voice of Fulano. 1983. Schenkman Publishing Co., Inc. 3 Mount Auburn Place, Cambridge, MA 02138. ($7.25 paperback)

In this book the medium is the message. Tomás Kalmar has worked in the field of adult education in Mexico, Australia, and the U.S. For the past four years he has been helping to create a learning environment in the tiny rural town on Cobden, Illinois, in which intelligent Mexican immigrants with little formal schooling can work on solving their own problems together. The struggle to find a place to meet, to cope with local prejudices, and finally to spell English phonemic clusters, is communicated in this book in the form of field notes and meditations. It's written in the spirit of dialogue -- you can open it at any page and start arguing with the author.

The fact remains that the diccionario that these people invented (as described in Tomás' book) is better than anything produced by more "legitimate" institutions engaged in producing ESL texts. Recommended for anyone who is involved in the teaching of English as a Second Language and especially for anyone who thinks they would enjoy browsing through a book authored by someone who believes in fatherhood, yodeling and friendship.

Kidd, Ross and Kumar, Krishna. "Coopting Freire: A Critical Analysis of Pseudo-Freirian Adult Education." Reprinted from the Economic and Political Weekly, XVI, Nos. 1 & 2 (January 3-10, 1981) pp. 27-36.

This 10 page article speaks so clearly about what is NOT Freirian, that it is very useful in clarifying what Freire is.

Kidd, Ross, and Byram, Martin. Popular Theatre: A Technique for Participatory Research. Participatory Research Group, Room S 417, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5r IV8. ($3.50)

Case study of community education campaigns in Botswana using popular theater as a base for participatory programming.

Luttrell, Wendy. Building Multi-Cultural Awareness -- A Teaching Approach to Learner Centered Education. 1982. Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program, 1546 East Frankford Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19125. ($5.50)

This publication includes a discussion of the community-based curriculum development process, a series of exercises developed for facilitator formation and a series of codifications devised by students and teachers of the Women's Program. 87 pages.

Shor, Ira. Critical Teaching and Everyday Life. 1980. South End Press, Box 68, Astor Sta., Boston, MA 02123. ($6.00)

This is one of the best, clearest, and most fun books to read, about applying Freire's ideas within the U.S. Shor works with worker-students in the community colleges of New York City. The book is useful to anyone interested in exploring ways of approaching a critical analysis of the learners' political and economic context; it's especially useful to those who facilitate classes in creative writing and want to connect those classes with concientizacion.

"Starting from Nina." D.E.C. Films, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5R 2G3. ($25 rental fee for community groups, high schools, and union locals.)

This good film is useful as a basic resource for introducing people to Freire's ideas. It has short interviews with Freire but largely focuses on 2 North American experiences in implementing Freire's ideas. Write to the above address for their brochure, or call the Development Education Center at (416) 964-6901 for more information.

Wallerstein, Nina. Language and Culture in Conflict: Problem-Posing in the ESL Classroom. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading MA 01867. ($11.95)

A practical guide for ESL facilitators, adapting Freire's problem-posing method to the ESL curriculum. Experiences in students; lives are used to promote affective learning, critical thinking, functional communication, and cultural sensitivity. The sample curriculum units cover eight basic themes: Autobiography, Family, Culture and Conflict, Neighborhood, Immigration, Health, Work, and Money.

Wheaton, Philip. "Towards the Societal Transformation of America's Imperialist Environment: The Applicability of the Pedagogy of Paulo Freire and Other Latin American Action and Reflection upon the Social Change Process in the United States." 1975. EPICA (Ecumenical Program for Interamerican Communication and Action), Wilson Center, 1470 Irving Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Phil Wheaton takes a careful look at the possibilities for social action here, within the United States. The paper outlines the problems in applying Freire's pedagogy within the contradictions of the American environment, and talks about criteria for Praxis.

Group Dynamics and Samples of Exercises and Activities

Bogantes Jiménez, Denia M.; Hernández Hernández, Maria; and Hidalgo Salguero, Francisco. Metodología Participativa de Capacitación para Promotores Sociales. 1981. World Education, 251 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010. ($7.00)

Preparado por el Departamento de Capacitación, Ministerio de Cultura, Juventud y Deportes, Costa Rica. Un paquete de materiales participatorios de capacitación para educadores en América Latina y otros trabajadores comunitarios de habla-español. El material que compone este manual está dividido en dos partes - la Guía para el Capacitador, y los Ejercicios para los Participantes. (The emphasis is on techniques of participatory education and exercises in group dynamics.) About 100 pp.

Crone, Catherine D., and St. John Hunter, Carmen. From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers. 1980. World Education, 251 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010. ($8.00)

Forty-seven participatory exercises are described, step-by-step, as they were used in actual training workshops. Especially useful for those who want to see concrete examples of group dynamics exercises that have been used. Each exercise begins with an explanation of what the facilitator was trying to accomplish, the setting in which it takes place, materials needed, steps taken in conducting the activity, and finally, and perhaps most interesting, a few paragraphs on "what happened," including reactions of the participants to the exercises.

Hyman, Ronald T. Improving Discussion Leadership. 1980. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027. ($9.95)

This book includes questioning strategies for five types of discussions, and describes facilitator skills in contributing, crystallizing, focusing, introducing, closing, questioning, supporting, and listening. It gives suggestions for preventing and solving discussion problems, and has a whole chapter devoted just to giving and receiving feedback. The book is concise, easy to read, and gives illustrative examples. 150 pp.

Jones, John E., and Pfeiffer, J. William. The Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators. University Associates, Inc., 8517 Production Avenue, San Diego, CA 92121. 10 volumes. ($14.50 paper, $36.50 looseleaf in binder, per volume.)

This is probably the most thorough and extensive resource available for exercises in group process. Since 1972, University Associates has published the Handbook as part of their Series in Human Relations Training.
(continued on following page)

Each volume of the Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators contains the following sections:

Structured Experiences -- about 10 separate activities, each explaining group size, time required, material needed, physical setting, and the process, in thorough detail.

Lecturettes -- brief explanations on various aspects of adult education and group process.

Theory & Practice -- papers sharing experiences in the field or describing theory

Resources -- reviews of films, video-tapes, training "packages," listing of various training, academic, and internship programs.

To acquire the whole set would be prohibitively expensive for almost all projects. Many universities, however, should have this in their libraries. Reprints of certain articles within the Handbook can be obtained from University Microfilms International (UMI), 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Call their toll free number for more information about reprintsÑ (800) 521-3042.

Technical Notes -- Ecuador Project. 1972-81. Center for International Education, Universtiy of Massachusetts, 285 Hills House South, Amherst, MA 01003. (13 notes -- $1.00 each.)

These are short little booklets (most are from 15 to 20 pages), available in both English and Spanish, describing in detail the actual activities and games that were developed and used in a facilitator training project in Ecuador in the early 1970's. Be sure to specify whether you want English or Spanish.

#1 The Ecuador Project: Description of the project and explanation about the materials produced.

#2 Conscientizacao and Simulation Games

#3 Hacienda: Description of a simulation game, attempting to replicate important aspects of rural life in Ecuador.

#4 Mercado: A card game to develop skill with market mathematics.

#5 Ashton-Warner Literacy Method: Description of a literacy method in which learners approach written culture on their own terms by using the words important to their lives.

#6 Letter Dice: Describes a game in which players toss eleven wooden dice, each face of which contains a letter. The letters showing are arranged and rearranged to assemble words. (Something like "Boggle".)

#7 Bingo: Fluency games for verbal and numerical operations.

#8 Math Fluency Games: Practice in basic arithmetic operations.

#9 Letter Fluency Games: Practice in literacy skills.

#10 Tabacundo: Discusses impact of cassette tape recorders as a feedback and programming technique in rural Ecuador radio school programs.

#11 Facilitator Model: Description of facilitator concept in community development in rural Ecuador.

#12 Theater and Puppets: Description of the use of theater and puppets as a tool for community dialogue and participation.

#13 Fotonovela: Development and use of the Fotonovela as a tool for literacy and community consciousness raising.

Vella, Jane K. Learning to Listen. 1979. Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. ($3.00)

This booklet describes practical ways of implementing theories of adult learning. It includes ways of listening, as well as ideas on the use of codes, role-playing, games, and folk material. There is also a chapter on group work, which addresses the role and the skill of the facilitator. 58 pp.

Weil, Marsha, and Joyce, Bruce. Social Models of Teaching. 1978. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. ($8.50 paper)

This book explains in detail three strategies "aimed at facilitating democratic processes and creating a more humane society." The examination of each of the three strategies or "models" -- Role Playing, Jurisprudential, and Simulation -- begins with the theoretical base, gives examples of facilitator behavior, suggests ways to practice the strategy, and offers methods of evaluating the experience. The book was written with teachers of high school students in mind, but may nevertheless be useful for those who want to explore the use of those models. 245 pp.

Facilitators' Training Manuals, and Plans for Facilitator Formation Workshops, Developed by Projects in the Educación Liberadora Network

Facilitator's Manual: Leadership Development Workshop. Mexican American Cultural Center, P.O. Box 28185, San Antonio, TX 73284.

The manual describes the content and pre-determined activities in a workshop that was designed to run for about 13 to 18 hours. It is followed by a supplement entitled, "Suggestions for Conducting Leadership Workshops."

For more information, call Leonard Andiano, (512) 732-2156.

Critical Consciousness and Community-Based Education. Colegio de la Tierra, P.O. Box 516, Goshen, CA 93227.

The most overtly political of established IRCEL formation programs, this paper describes the content of a series of one-to-one dialogues that take place once a week for four months. Each session is seven hours long.

The paper begins with a political analysis of the situation of Chicanos in this country, and continues with a look at education in that political context. The objectives of Colegio de la Tierra are then clearly stated. The manual then discusses the purpose of codes, and explains the process to be followed. Then there is an examination of the individual's life as seen within the political context. The process ends with planning for action and developing strategies for implementing the plan.

For further information, call Tony Muñoz at (209) 732-4578.

Manual de Entrenamiento de Animadores. Proyecto PRIDE, Labor Education Center, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903.

This manual, written in Spanish, was prepared by a consultant who was not part of the project. The material, therefore, does not relate specifically to one community of learners, but concentrates mainly on explaining the way in which adults learn, in general, and then discusses characteristics and techniques of a participatory approach to adult education.

For persons who are looking for information on group dynamics and group exercises written in the Spanish language, this may be very helpful.

For further information, contact Iris Santos Rivera at (201) 932-9076.

Programa de Ejercicios para la Formación de Facilitadores. *D.A.R.E. (¡Atrevete!) Puerto Rican Center for Lifelong Studies, P.O. Box 6783 Loiza Station, Santurce, PR 00914.*

This program of facilitator formation begins, right from the beginning, with an explanation and practice in the use of generative themes. It was designed that way so that the facilitators, who were project participants only a month earlier, would have the satisfaction of learning about the role of a facilitator right away.

The material is written entirely in Spanish.

The program was planned in advance with pre-determined exercises set for each day. There is a clear explanation of the activities that were planned to take place. Some of the exercises were designed to analyze poverty and its causes, and to take a critical look at education. Most of the exercises focus on understanding group process, and on developing self-esteem.

For more information, call América Facundo at (809) 726-3192.

Not in Any Other Category

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia. Teacher. 1971. Bantam Books, Inc. 666 5th Ave., New York, NY 10019. ($2.25 paper)

This book is not about Freire and it's not about political-economic analysis and it's not about group process, but anyone who's helping another person to learn how to read should first read this book. Ashton-Warner writes about her experiences in teaching 5-year old Maori children to read in New Zealand. The approach she developed there, which relies not on primers but on the dialogues she has with the children and the dynamic words which surface from that interaction, is relevant to adult literacy education. It is a very human book, and an important one.

Adams, Frank. Unearthing Seeds of Fire: The Idea of Highlander. 1975. John F. Blair Publishers, 1406 Plaza Dr., Winston-Salem, NC 27103. ($7.95)

Myles Horton was doing liberatory education, much like Freire, way back in the 1930's, in North America. Groups of facilitators working here within the U.S. should find it exciting to become familiar with the bold experiments in Appalachia over the last 50 years. For information about current programs write or telephone Highlander Center, Route 3, Box 370, New Market, TN 37820, (615) 933-3443.

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